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EXAMINER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/529,184	Applicant(s) EBLING ET AL.	
	Examiner Matthew R Demicco	Art Unit 2697	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 2/14/03 .

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) 1-48 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) 1-48 is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on 07 April 2000 is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☒ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to because of the following minor informality: in Figure 2, Element 449 is a duplicate of Element 447 and is not made reference to in the specification. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the following elements are shown in drawings but not described in the specification; Figure 1, Element 215, Figure 3, Element 300, Figure 5, Element 510, and Figure 18, Elements 62 and 64. Furthermore, on Page 8 of the disclosure, Applicant references drawing elements 420-433 which is inclusive and thereby references elements not shown in the drawings. Similarly on page 11, Applicant references drawing elements 805-850. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 22-43 and 45-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding Claims 22-43, the Applicant claims an apparatus, storage medium, and a method for respectively decoding, storing, and forming packetized program information with means for identifying information describing a **method** associated with a multimedia object wherein this method descriptions identifies a method and means for acquiring, decoding and activating this method. As best understood by the Examiner, the use of the term "method" by the Applicant is to describe specific program code used to process a given multimedia object. Nowhere in the specification is there mention of such a feature, although it is well known in the art that various browser plug-in applications are described, acquired, decoded, and activated to process various multimedia content on the Internet.

Regarding Claim 45, the Applicant claims a method wherein the ancillary information includes an identifier for identifying a location of data representing a method. While understood above in claims 22-43 to be a particular program code for decoding a multimedia object, in the context of this claim, "method" has no understood or defined meaning in relation to the disclosure and therefore is found to be indefinite by the Examiner.

Regarding Claim 46, the Applicant claims "wherein said said first, second and third identifiers..." The Examiner interprets this to be "wherein one of said first, second, and third identifiers..." for the purpose of examination only. Appropriate corrections are required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 1-2, 4-8 and 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,818,935 to Maa.

Regarding Claim 1, Maa discloses an apparatus for decoding packetized program information from a first source to provide data content of a program. The system of Maa is a set top box (Col. 4, Line 56) for accessing Internet links embedded in a video signal (Col. 4, Lines 19-37). The system of Maa discloses means for identifying information in a program packet (See Figure 1, Video Data Extractor), which describes a multimedia object (Web Page) associated with an image in the program information (Col. 5, Lines 20-25). The multimedia object description information contains a location indicator identifying a location of a multimedia object for use in acquiring said multimedia object in the form of a URL (Col. 5, Lines 26-64). Further, the information contains a type indicator identifying a multimedia object type ("Format Code or Specifier," Col. 5, Lines 26-64) for use in decoding the object. The system of Maa further has means for acquiring and decoding the multimedia object using the description information (See Figure 1, Modem and Processing Unit) and formatting the object for display (See Figure 1, Font Repository and Video Display Processor).

Regarding Claim 2, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 1 wherein the location indicator identifies a location of the multimedia object in information derived from a second source different from the first source. In the system of Maa, the second source is the Internet and the first source is a video signal (See Figure 1).

Regarding Claim 4, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 2 wherein the location indicator identifies a location of a multimedia object derived from the second source using an Internet URL as stated above. Further, it is inherent in such a system that to properly address and communicate with a web site referenced by a URL, the IP address must be resolved and used.

Regarding Claim 5, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 4 wherein the means for acquiring the multimedia object includes establishing bi-directional communication with the second source using the location indicator. The bi-directional path (Internet connection, See Figure 1) is different from the communication path between the decoding apparatus and the first source ("RF video signal," Col. 4, Line 23).

Regarding Claim 6, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 1 wherein the multimedia object comprises a web page that is viewed in a web browser (Col. 6, Lines 53-64). It is inherent in such a system that a web page being displayed on a web browser would be able to display video or still images, audio, text, advertisements, icons, animation, Email or a user prompting indicator such as a form table.

Regarding Claim 7, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 1 wherein the multimedia object description information further includes an object format ("Format code or specifier," Col. 5, Lines 35-38) for use in decoding.

Regarding Claim 8, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 1 wherein the formatting means include means for associating the multimedia object with a video image (Col. 4, Lines 51-65) wherein the means forms a composite image for display combining the multimedia object and a video program (Col. 5, Lines 1-3).

Regarding Claim 19, Maa discloses a method for decoding packetized program information to provide data content of a program. The system of Maa is a set top box (Col. 4, Line 56) for accessing Internet links embedded in a video signal (Col. 4, Lines 19-37). The system of Maa discloses identifying information in a program packet (See Figure 1, Video Data Extractor), which describes a multimedia object (Web Page) associated with an image in the program information (Col. 5, Lines 20-25). The multimedia object description information contains a location indicator identifying a location of a multimedia object for use in acquiring said multimedia object in the form of a URL (Col. 5, Lines 26-64). Further, the information contains a type indicator identifying a multimedia object type ("Format Code or Specifier," Col. 5, Lines 26-64) for use in decoding the object. The system of Maa further acquires and decodes the multimedia object using the description information (See Figure 1, Modem and Processing Unit) and formats the object for display (See Figure 1, Font Repository and Video Display Processor).

Regarding Claim 20, Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 19 wherein the multimedia object is associated with a video image (Col. 5, Lines 14-25).

Regarding Claim 21, Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 20 wherein a composite image is formed for display combining the multimedia object and a video program (Col. 5, Lines 1-25).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maa in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,768,539 to Metz et al.

Regarding Claim 3, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 2. What Maa does not disclose, however, is the use of an MPEG packet identifier (PID) in the location indicator for the location of the multimedia object. Metz discloses a set-top terminal connected to a network for displaying additional programming information as seen in Figure 9. Metz discloses the specification of an MPEG PID in the location indicator to locate audio and video data to be decoded and presented in response to a user input (Col. 43, Lines 35-39). Metz is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of utilizing MPEG PIDs to transport multimedia data and a pointer to this data in a location indicator. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having

ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the video and multimedia-displaying apparatus of Maa with the referencing of MPEG PIDs for audio and video transport and location of Metz in order to transport and address multimedia objects sent in auxiliary data streams multiplexed with the initial video feed data.

9. Claims 9-11, 44 and 46-48 are rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,025,837 to Matthews, III et al.

Regarding Claim 9, Maa discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 1. What is not disclosed, however, is the use of ancillary information to convey an electronic program guide from the first source wherein the multimedia object is associated with the program guide. Matthews discloses an electronic program guide with a hyperlink browser. Ancillary information containing EPG data is conveyed through the first data source, in this case RF Communication from a video head end (Col. 6, Lines 45-64). Further, Matthews discloses the association between the multimedia object and the program guide (Col. 9, Lines 56-60). Matthews is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of transmitting EPG data in conjunction with video programming in an Internet enabled set top box. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the video and multimedia-displaying apparatus of Maa with the multimedia-object linked EPG of Matthews in order to enable a program guide to present further information to a user and link program icons to web pages.

Regarding Claim 10, Maa discloses a system as stated above in Claim 1 wherein digital data representing video information contains packetized program information representing a video program and ancillary information including information describing a multimedia object associated with an image in the packetized program information. Maa further discloses the inclusion of a location indicator and a type indicator in the object information. Maa also discloses information for associating the multimedia object with an image as stated above in Claim 8. What is not disclosed, however, is a storage medium containing the aforementioned digital data. Matthews discloses a system as stated above wherein a head end provides digital video data and an EPG server. The system of Matthews implements a disk array data storage system to store video data (Col. 6, Lines 46-58) and an SQL database to store EPG data (Col. 6, Lines 59-64). The data fields for storing pointers to other media as well as hypermedia and other supplemental content are stored in the database as well (Col. 7, Lines 1-31). Further, Matthews discloses caching the databases locally on the client set top boxes (Col. 7, Lines 32-35). Matthews is evidence that ordinary workers would recognize the benefit of storing digital data on a storage medium in a video and multimedia system. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the video and multimedia-displaying apparatus of Maa with the storage medium containing digital data representing video information of Matthews in order to quickly and non-linearly retrieve, transmit, cache, and playback digital data and packetized program information containing ancillary information.

Regarding Claim 11, Maa in view of Matthews discloses a system as stated above in Claim 10. Matthews further discloses that the ancillary information comprises program specific information containing an electronic program guide wherein the multimedia object is associated with the program guide as stated above in Claim 9.

Regarding Claim 44, Maa discloses a method for processing packetized program information from a first source (RF Video) to provide data content to a program comprising a method of identifying ancillary information in the packetized program information (See Figures 3-6). The information includes a first identifier for identifying a location of data representing a multimedia object (URL, See Figure 3). The information further includes an identifier for identifying a location of data representing a video program in the program information (Cols. 14-15, Lines 60-19). It is inherent in such an MPEG-2 stream that various video channels and program data are multiplexed together and addressed by PIDs. The system of Maa discloses acquiring and decoding the multimedia object and video program data using the ancillary information and formatting the data for display (See Figure 1, Video Display Processor). What is not disclosed, however, is a second identifier for identifying a location of data representing a program guide. Matthews discloses an electronic program guide wherein program guide data is provided by the video head end (Col. 6, Lines 59-64). Matthews is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of distributing electronic program guide information in a packetized data program stream of a web browser-enabled set top box. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the method of Maa with the electronic program guide

data of Matthews in order to implement such a program guide in a GUI-enabled set top box already supporting packetized data processing.

Regarding Claim 46, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of Matthews discloses a method as stated above in Claim 44. Maa discloses a method wherein the first identifier for identifying a location of data representing a multimedia object identifies a location of the multimedia object in the packetized program information from the first source (See Figure 2). Matthews discloses a method wherein the second identifier for identifying a location of data representing program guide information identifies a location of the multimedia object in the packetized program information from the first source (See Figure 2).

Regarding Claim 47, Maa in view of Matthews discloses a method as stated above in Claim 46. Maa discloses a method wherein the information is derived from a second source different from the first source using an Internet URL (Col. 5, Lines 56-57).

Regarding Claim 48, Maa in view of Matthews discloses a method as stated above in Claim 44. Maa further discloses a method wherein the formatting step includes associating the multimedia object with a video image (Col. 5, Lines 14-25) and forming a composite image for display combining the multimedia object and a video program (Col. 5, Lines 1-13).

10. Claims 12-13 and 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matthews, III et al. in view of Maa.

Regarding Claim 12, Matthews discloses a method for forming program guide information at a first source suitable for decoding the information to provide data content of a program (See Figures 2 and 5). Matthews further discloses forming information describing a multimedia object associated with an image in the program information (Col. 7, Lines 9-30 and Figure 7). The information comprises a location indicator identifying a location of a multimedia object for use in acquiring the object (See Figure 2) and forming linking information associating the object with an image in the information. The multimedia object and linking information is incorporated with the packetized data for output to a transmission channel (Col. 7, Lines 22-42). What is not disclosed, however, is a type indicator identifying a multimedia object type for use in decoding the object. Maa discloses a system as stated above wherein a format code or specifier is included in the information (Col. 5, Lines 35-47). Maa is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of including a format code when sending multimedia information. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the program guide method of Matthews with the included format code of Maa in order to facilitate decoding of the multimedia object data at the client side terminal.

Regarding Claim 13, Matthews in view of Maa disclose a method as stated above in Claim 12. Matthews further discloses that the location indicator identifies a location of the multimedia object in information derived from a second source different from the first source. In the system of Matthews, the second source is the Internet and the first source is a video signal (See Figure 3).

Regarding Claim 15, Matthews in view of Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 13. Matthews further discloses that the location indicator identifies a location of the multimedia object derived from the second source using Internet URL (See Figure 2). Further, it is inherent in such a system that to properly address and communicate with a web site referenced by a URL, the IP address must be resolved and used.

Regarding Claim 16, Matthews in view of Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 15. Matthews further discloses a method wherein the multimedia object comprises a web page that is viewed in a web browser (Col. 10, Lines 30-35). It is inherent in such a system that a web page being displayed on a web browser would be able to display video or still images, audio, text, advertisements, icons, animation, Email or a user prompting indicator such as a form table.

Regarding Claim 17, Matthews in view of Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 12. Maa further discloses a method wherein the multimedia object description information further includes an object format ("Format code or specifier," Col. 5, Lines 35-38) for use in decoding.

Regarding Claim 18, Matthews in view of Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 12. Matthews further discloses a method wherein linking information associates the multimedia object with an electronic program guide as shown in Figure 7.

11. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matthews, III et al. in view of Maa and further in view of Metz et al.

Regarding Claim 14, Matthews in view of Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 13. What is not disclosed, however, is the use of an MPEG packet identifier (PID) in the location indicator for the location of the multimedia object. Metz discloses a set-top terminal connected to a network for displaying additional programming information as seen in Figure 9. Metz discloses the specification of an MPEG PID in the location indicator to locate audio and video data to be decoded and presented in response to a user input (Col. 43, Lines 35-39). Metz is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of utilizing MPEG PIDs to transport multimedia data and a pointer to this data in a location indicator. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the video and multimedia-displaying method of Matthews in view of Maa with the referencing of MPEG PIDs for audio and video transport and location of Metz in order to transport and address multimedia objects sent in auxiliary data streams multiplexed with the initial video feed data.

12. Claims 22-25, 32-34 and 41-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maa in view of well known prior art.

Regarding Claim 22, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa discloses an apparatus for decoding packetized program information from a first source to provide data content to a program comprising means for identifying ancillary information in the program information as stated above in Claim 1. What is not disclosed, however, is information describing a method associated with a multimedia object in the information

that enables identification of a method, initiating activation of a method, acquiring and decoding the method, and activating the method upon a predetermined event using the description information. Official Notice is hereby taken that it well known in the art to enable web browsing applications with the ability to identify, based on incoming packetized program data describing a multimedia object and a method, retrieve, decode, and activate a plug in application to process various forms of multimedia objects. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the web-enabled apparatus of Maa with plug-ins from well known-prior art in order to enable handling of non-native multimedia object types.

Regarding Claim 23, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 22. The web browser plug in from well-known prior art comprises software that can alter a user interface display control, generate an image window within an encompassing image, generate a menu of selectable items, generate an icon representing a user selectable item for display, generating an image window for initiating Internet access, and generating an image window supporting an electronic commerce transaction.

Regarding Claim 24, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 23. It is inherent in such a system that in order to alter a user interface display control, generate an image window, etc., that the display video characteristics must be modified.

Regarding Claim 25, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 22. The web browser plug

in from well-known prior art discloses providing at least one user selectable control item associated with said image object. Examples of such plug-ins are Macromedia Director, Shockwave, and Flash plug-ins as well as Apple's Quicktime VR plug-in, which was known and used in the art prior to the instant invention.

Regarding Claim 32, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 22. Maa discloses an apparatus wherein the ancillary information includes acquisition information for use in acquiring data from a second source (See Figure 1), which includes an Internet URL (See Figure 3). Such data could be a method as stated above in Claim 22. Further, it is inherent in such a system that to properly address and communicate with a web site referenced by a URL, the IP address must be resolved and used.

Regarding Claim 33, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 32. Maa discloses an apparatus wherein the means for acquiring data includes establishing bi-directional communication with the second source using the location indicator. The bi-directional path (Internet connection, See Figure 1) is different from the communication path between the decoding apparatus and the first source ("RF video signal,"Col. 4, Line 23). Such data could be a method as stated above in Claim 32.

Regarding Claim 34, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 22. Maa discloses an apparatus wherein the formatting means include means for combining the data with a video program (Col. 5, Lines 1-25) wherein the means forms a composite image for

display combining the multimedia object and a video program. Such data could be a method as stated above in Claim 22.

Regarding Claim 41, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 19. What is not disclosed, however, is identifying information describing a method associated with one or more images wherein this description comprises information enabling identification of the method, initiating activation of the method upon a predetermined event, acquiring and decoding the method using the description information and initiating activation of the method upon the predetermined event using the description information. Official Notice is hereby taken that it well known in the art to enable web browsing applications, such as those of Maa, with the ability to identify, based on incoming packetized program data describing a multimedia object and a method, retrieve, decode, and activate a plug in application to process various forms of multimedia objects. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further combine the method for processing packetized program information of Maa with plug-ins from well known-prior art in order to enable handling of non-native multimedia object types in a hyper-linked environment.

Regarding Claim 42, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art discloses a method as stated above in Claim 41. Maa discloses a method wherein data acquisition is over a second source (Internet) different from the first source (RF Video Signal) using an Internet URL (Col. 5, Lines 55-56). The data could be a method as stated above in Claim 41.

Regarding Claim 43, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art discloses a method as stated above in Claim 41. Maa further discloses initiating activation of a hyperlink in response to user selection of a command or displayed menu item (Col. 7, Lines 1-14). The hyperlink could be to a browser plug in as stated above.

13. Claims 26-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maa in view of well known prior art and further in view of Matthews, III et al.

Regarding Claim 26, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 22. What is not disclosed, however, is the activation of the method in response to a user selection of a command or displayed menu item. Matthews discloses activation of an Internet resource upon a predetermined event comprising a response to a user selection of a command or displayed menu item (See Figure 7). The Internet resource could be a method as stated above in Claim 22. Matthews is evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of activating a web browser plug-in in response to a user selecting a menu item on the screen. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the apparatus for decoding packetized information and activating a method of Maa in view of well-known prior art with the activation of a resource in response to a user selection of Matthews in order to activate a web browser plug-in in response to a request for a multimedia object made by a user on a web page display.

Regarding Claim 27, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art and further in view of Matthews disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 26. Matthews further discloses an apparatus wherein the information for initiating activation of the method upon a scheduled event comprises a start time indication (Col. 12, Lines 8-29).

Regarding Claim 28, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art and further in view of Matthews disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 27. Matthews further discloses an apparatus wherein the start time indication is associated with a specific video program and is derived from electronic program guide information (See Figure 2).

Regarding Claim 29, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art and further in view of Matthews disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 27. Matthews further discloses an apparatus wherein the information for initiating activation of the method further includes a duration (See Figure 5).

Regarding Claim 30, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art discloses an apparatus as stated above in Claim 22. What is not disclosed, however, is an apparatus wherein the ancillary information includes electronic program guide information from the first source. Matthews discloses an electronic program guide with a hyperlink browser. Ancillary information containing EPG data is conveyed through the first data source, in this case RF Communication from a video head end (Col. 6, Lines 45-64). Further, Matthews discloses the association between the method and the program guide (Col. 9, Lines 56-60). Matthews is evidence that ordinary workers in the

art would recognize the benefit of transmitting EPG data in conjunction with video programming in an Internet enabled set top box. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the video and multimedia-displaying apparatus of Maa in view of well-known prior art with the method-linked EPG of Matthews in order to enable a program guide to present further information to a user and link program icons to web pages.

Regarding Claim 31, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of well-known prior art and further in view of Matthews disclose an apparatus as stated above in Claim 27. Maa further discloses an apparatus wherein the ancillary information includes information for acquiring data from the first source comprising an identifier for identifying a location of the method conveyed within the information from the first source. The data can be a command code (See Figure 4), which can point to a message location containing a URL (Col. 5, Lines 48-64). Matthews further discloses an apparatus wherein supplemental content including text, hypermedia, etc. which is distributed by the head end across the first data source (Col. 7, Lines 13-16). Maa and Matthews are evidence that ordinary workers in the art would recognize the benefit of embedding a pointer to data, and the data itself in a video data stream from a first source. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention made to further modify the apparatus of Maa in view of well-known prior art further in view of Matthews with the embedded pointer and data in the first data source in order to facilitate quick, controlled updates of end user hardware from a centralized head end.

14. Claims 35-36 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maa in view of Matthews and in further view of well known prior art.

Regarding Claim 35, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of Matthews discloses a system as stated above in Claim 10. What is not disclosed, however, is the ancillary information including information describing a method associated with a multimedia object. Also not disclosed is information enabling identification of a method, information for initiating activation of the method upon a predetermined event and information for associating the method with a multimedia object in the program information. It is understood by the Examiner that the claimed method is a program or code enabling the system to processor data and a multimedia object to be video, audio, or other hypermedia contained in a web page. Official Notice is hereby taken that it well known in the art to enable web browsing applications with the ability to identify, based on incoming packetized program data describing a multimedia object and a method, retrieve, decode, and activate a plug in application to process various forms of multimedia objects. Further, it is well known in the art to use hyper-linking to associate the method with a multimedia object in the program information. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further combine the storage medium apparatus of Maa in view of Matthews with plug-ins from well known-prior art in order to enable handling of non-native multimedia object types.

Regarding Claim 36, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of Matthews and further in view of well-known prior art disclose a system as stated above in

Claim 35. Matthews further discloses a system wherein the ancillary information includes electronic program guide information and hyperlink data is associated with the program guide (See Figure 7). The hyperlink can be used to associate a method as stated above in Claim 36 with elements of the program guide.

Regarding Claim 45, as best understood by the Examiner, Maa in view of Matthews discloses a method as stated above in Claim 45. What is not disclosed, however, is a method wherein the ancillary information further includes a fourth identifier for identifying a location of data representing a method. Official Notice is hereby taken that it is well known in the art that web browsers are able to execute external program code (methods) in order to process various non-native multimedia objects. It is also well known in the art that a web server would transmit a MIME type identifier to identify the type of non-native multimedia object. This reads on the claimed ancillary information including an identifier for identifying a location of data representing a method.

15. Claims 37-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matthews in view of Maa and further in view of well known prior art.

Regarding Claim 37, as best understood by the Examiner, Matthews in view of Maa discloses a method as stated above in Claim 12. What is not disclosed, however, is forming information describing a method associated with one or more images wherein this description comprises information enabling identification of the method, initiating activation of the method upon a predetermined event, forming linking information

associating the method with an image in the packetized program information, and incorporating the method description information and linking information into the packetized data for output to a transmission channel. Official Notice is hereby taken that it well known in the art to enable web browsing applications, such as those of Maa and Matthews, with the ability to identify, based on incoming packetized program data describing a multimedia object and a method, retrieve, decode, and activate a plug in application to process various forms of multimedia objects. Further, it is well known in the art to use hyper-linking to associate the method with a multimedia object in the program information. Also it is well known to incorporate the plug-in description information and linking information into the packetized data for output to a transmission channel in the form of hyper-linked HTML code and MIME type codes. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further combine the method for forming program guide information of Matthews in view of Maa with plug-ins from well known-prior art in order to enable handling of non-native multimedia object types in a hyper-linked program guide.

Regarding Claim 38, as best understood by the Examiner, Matthews in view of Maa and further in view of well-known prior art disclose a method as stated above in Claim 37. Further, Matthews discloses a method wherein the first data source (head end) transmits supplemental content that can be text, hypermedia, etc. (Col. 7, Lines 13-16). The transmitted data can be a hyperlink to the plug-in data. This reads on the method identification information identifying the location of the method in the program information from the first source.

Regarding Claim 39, as best understood by the Examiner, Matthews in view of Maa and further in view of well-known prior art disclose a method as stated above in Claim 37. Matthews discloses a method wherein supplemental content includes data for acquiring Internet content from a second source (ISP Host) different from the first source (RF Communication) using an Internet URL (See Figure 2). Supplemental content can include method description information including a hyperlink to a browser plug-in on the Internet as stated above.

Regarding Claim 40, as best understood by the Examiner, Matthews in view of Maa and further in view of well-known prior art disclose a method as stated above in Claim 37. Matthews discloses a method wherein supplemental data is linked to from an electronic program guide. This supplemental data could be a browser plug-in as stated above.

Conclusion

16. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U.S. Patent No. 6,469,753 to Klosterman et al. discloses an electronic program guide with scheduling, internet address linking and a web browser.

U.S. Patent No. 6,005,565 to Legall et al. discloses an electronic program guide with Internet search capabilities.

U.S. Patent No. 6,199,206 to Nishioka et al. discloses an electronic program guide with GUI with Internet access.

U.S. Patent No 6,268,849 to Boyer et al. discloses an Internet-enabled electonric program guide with embedded data transport.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew R Demicco whose telephone number is (703) 305-8155. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 9am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Faile can be reached on (703) 305-4380. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703 308-5359 for regular communications and (703) 872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

KA Williams

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mrd
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